

132-9

Form 10-300  
(Dec. 1968)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Virginia	
COUNTY: (in cit.)	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

<b>1. NAME</b>	
COMMON: Western State Hospital	
AND/OR HISTORIC: Western State Lunatic Asylum	

<b>2. LOCATION</b>			
STREET AND NUMBER: Greenville Avenue, SE corner of intersection of Greenville Avenue (Rt. 11)			
CITY OR TOWN: and Rt. 250. Staunton			
STATE Virginia	CODE 45	COUNTY: (in cit.)	CODE 2330

<b>3. CLASSIFICATION</b>			
CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS
District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public Acquisition:	Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes:
Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/>	Private <input type="checkbox"/>	In Process <input type="checkbox"/>	Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Object <input type="checkbox"/>	Both <input type="checkbox"/>	Being Considered <input type="checkbox"/>	Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/>
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/>	Government <input type="checkbox"/>	Park <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Comments
Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	Industrial <input type="checkbox"/>	Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hospital
Educational <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input type="checkbox"/>	Religious <input type="checkbox"/>	
Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/>	Museum <input type="checkbox"/>	Scientific <input type="checkbox"/>	

<b>4. OWNER OF PROPERTY</b>			
OWNERS NAME: Commonwealth of Virginia			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE: Virginia	CODE 45	STATE: Virginia COUNTY: (in cit.)

<b>5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION</b>			
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Augusta County Court House			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN: Staunton	STATE: Virginia	CODE 45	STATE: Virginia COUNTY: (in cit.)
APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 25 acres			

<b>6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS</b>			
TITLE OF SURVEY: Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Report #132-9			
DATE OF SURVEY: 1969 Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/>			
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission			
STREET AND NUMBER: Ninth Street Office Building			
CITY OR TOWN: Richmond	STATE: Virginia	CODE 45	ENTRY NUMBER DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

7. DESCRIPTION			
CONDITION	(Check One)		
	Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed <input type="checkbox"/>
INTEGRITY	(Check One)		(Check One)
	Altered <input type="checkbox"/>	Unaltered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Moved <input type="checkbox"/> Original Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE			
<p>The group of buildings comprising the <u>ante-bellum</u> portion of Western State Hospital is a complex of six structures, the oldest and most important of which is the five-part central structure now known as the administration building. The central portion of this building is a three-story hipped roof structure surmounted by an octagonal cupola, and is connected to the temple-form end pavilions by two-story hyphens. The whole mass is fourteen bays wide. The fronts of both the center pavilion and the two-story end pavilions are embellished with tetrastyle Greek Ionic porticos added about eight year after the building itself was built. The porticos of the end pavilions are pedimented while that of the center is flat with a parapet. This building, as well as all the others in the group are laid in especially fine Flemish bond brickwork. Surrounding each section of the administration building is an unornamented entablature.</p> <p>The interior of the administration building has survived remarkably unaltered. The plan consists of a central hall with central corridors through the hyphens and the end pavilions. The woodwork throughout is quite sophisticated and refined Greek Revival type. The small double spiral staircases at either end of the building are skillfully designed. Most of the building's original hardware including the interesting locks and large hinges on the doors of the original patients' rooms also survives.</p> <p>Immediately behind the administration building and on axis with it is the three-story chapel. The chapel building actually houses a number of activities including dining and kitchen facilities with the chapel itself located on the third floor of the central portion of the building. While the building is for the most part Greek Revival, the chapel windows are Gothic with interlacing tracery.</p> <p>Flanking the administration building on the north and south are massive Greek Revival structures containing additional patient accommodation. The south building's facade faces west as does the administration building, while the north building has its facade to the north. Both buildings are embellished by an engaged Greek Doric portico on their facades, and a shallow clerestory topped by a Chinese lattice railing surmounting their hipped roofs. Like the administration building, both of the flanking buildings are crowned by an octagonal cupola. The north building is four stories in height and has been somewhat altered, but the three story south building is generally in its original state. Two smaller but much altered <u>ante-bellum</u> also survive. The one to the northeast of the administration building is known as Ward #3, and the one to the southeast is Ward #4.</p> <p>The entire complex is situated in a finely landscaped romantic type park, with large shade trees, summer house, rock formations and fountains. A noteworthy iron fence erected in the 1850's encloses the grounds.</p>			

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

## 8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
Pre-Columbian <input type="checkbox"/>	16th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	18th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	20th Century <input type="checkbox"/>
15th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	17th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	19th Century <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)			
AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/>	Education <input type="checkbox"/>	Political <input type="checkbox"/>	Urban Planning <input type="checkbox"/>
Prehistoric <input type="checkbox"/>	Engineering <input type="checkbox"/>	Religion/Philosophy <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Medical History</u>
Historic <input type="checkbox"/>	Industry <input type="checkbox"/>	Science <input type="checkbox"/>	
Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/>	Invention <input type="checkbox"/>	Sculpture <input type="checkbox"/>	
Art <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Landscape <input type="checkbox"/>	Social/Humanitarian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Commerce <input type="checkbox"/>	Architecture <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Theater <input type="checkbox"/>	
Communications <input type="checkbox"/>	Literature <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>	
Conservation <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Music <input type="checkbox"/>		

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

The Western Lunatic Asylum of Virginia, or Western State Hospital as it is now known, was founded in 1825 by the passage of an Act of the Assembly authorizing the purchase of a site and the erection of the buildings of the institution near Staunton, Virginia. The asylum was established to relieve the pressures from the institution in Williamsburg, and to offer a more conveniently located asylum for the State's western citizens. Admission of the asylum was restricted to those "who are either dangerous to society from their violence, or who are offensive to its moral sense by their indecency, and to those cases of derangement where there is reasonable ground to hope that the afflicted may be restored."

William Small, a Baltimore architect, was commissioned by the Commonwealth to design the first and main structure. The building he produced ranks as one of the earliest and most important Greek Revival public buildings in Virginia. The structural quality and aesthetic appeal of Small's building reflects the remarkably advanced attitude toward mental treatment taken by the early directors of the institution. In the annual report of 1839 the directors stated ". . . everything like violence and coercion has been abandoned at the Western Lunatic Asylum, and the mildest and most soothing parental conduct has been substituted in its stead."

The next building to be built at the asylum was the massive Greek Revival structure to the north of the main building completed by 1839 by the builder William D. Phillips of Albemarle County. The large southern flanking building was completed by 1841. Two other Greek Revival style wards to the northeast and southeast of the main building were erected in 1842. The chapel building, with its interesting blend of Gothic and Greek architectural elements was designed by Thomas Blackburn, and was erected circa 1851. The chapel's tracker-action pipe organ was presented to the institution by William Wilson Corcoran, who while visiting there was deeply impressed by the patients' attention to religious service.

The ante bellum buildings at Western State Hospital stand not only as one of the Commonwealth's great architectural treasures, but as a testament to the tradition of enlightened care of the mentally ill in Virginia. It was realized by one of the hospital's early superintendents that the beauty of the site and surroundings of the institution, as well as the clean, comfortable and noble buildings could have an invaluable therapeutic effect on the patients. His view was supported in 1851 by an article in the New York Observer which stated that Western State was "one of the most comfortable and best ordered establishments of its kind in the country."

# 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

William B. O'Neal, Architecture in Virginia. New York: Walker and Company, 1968; interview 8 April 1969 with Dr. Hansen, superintendent of Western State; "A History of Western State Hospital."

# 10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY.			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN ONE ACRE		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
NW	Degrees Minutes Seconds 38° 08' 46"	Degrees Minutes Seconds 79° 04' 18"		Degrees Minutes Seconds 0	Degrees Minutes Seconds 0	
NE	38° 08' 46"	79° 01' 35"				
SE	38° 07' 40"	79° 01' 35"				
SW	38° 08' 46"	79° 04' 18"				

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

# 11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Staff, Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, James W. Moody, Jr., Director		
ORGANIZATION Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission	DATE 9 April 1969	
STREET AND NUMBER: Ninth Street Office Building		
CITY OR TOWN: Richmond	STATE Virginia	CODE 45

# 12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

# NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☐

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

